

ADDRESS

TO THE

FRIENDS OF LIBERTY,

BY

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

OF THE

AMER. AND FOR. ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY.

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IN view of the approaching Presidential election, the undersigned, members of the Executive Committee of the American and Foreign Anti-slavery Society, beg leave to offer some considerations to the friends of impartial liberty. They do it, not in a spirit of dictation, but with the hope of preserving the unity, and promoting the efficient action, of those associated with them,—of gaining the co-operation of all who prize the constitution of our country, who value our civil and religious institutions, and who desire to act on Christian principles, in the great work of overthrowing American slavery.

It is a subject of devout thanksgiving to God that experience has demonstrated the soundness of the doctrines of a large majority of the abolitionists of Great Britain and the United States, that they are consistent with the best interests of mankind, in accordance with true philosophy and pure Christianity; that the measures adopted to communicate these important truths to the people of this country, with a view to bring about the peaceful abolition of slavery, have been so consistent with these principles; and that these

doctrines and measures have been so signally overruled and blessed in furtherance of the cause of emancipation, republican liberty, and Christian freedom. Reflecting men can see that amidst all the opposition, violence, threats, and machinations of slave-holders, and their abettors, the cause of liberty has steadily advanced, and is about to be brought to a glorious consummation. And it ought to inspire the people of this country with gratitude, that such a momentous moral reformation, affecting the temporal and eternal welfare of millions of people, in this and coming generations, is to be achieved at no greater sacrifice. So deeply involved were the people of this country in the guilt of oppression and prejudice that probably nothing short of murders under Lynch law, profligate expenditures of life and property,—war, robbery and conquest,—and audacious attempts to defend, extend and perpetuate slavery, would have aroused the people of the free states to a consideration of impending danger, and inspired them with a determination to avert it. Much as the unconstitutional annexation of Texas, with the consequent war with Mexico, is deplored, this great calamity and ineffaceable national reproach will, we doubt not, be overruled for the downfall of the politicians who perpetrated the enormous evil, and for the arrestation and overthrow of American slavery, for which the annexation and war were perfidiously brought about. “HE TAKETH THE WISE IN THEIR OWN CRAFTINESS . . . . SURELY THE WRATH OF MAN SHALL PRAISE THEE : THE REMAINDER OF WRATH SHALT THOU RESTRAIN.”

Thanks to an overruling Providence, the great body of the people of the free states are beginning to see that their rights and their liberties are in jeopardy, and bands of patriotic and resolute men are standing aloof from their political parties, vowing eternal hostility to the extension of slavery. We see in these auspicious events, that the Al-

mighty has been pleased to bless the instrumentality of those who early sounded the alarm, who have steadfastly advocated the cause of the oppressed, who have warned their countrymen of the encroachments of the slaveocracy, who have expended their property and hazarded their lives in defence of the rights of man, and the freedom inherited from their fathers. Had they faltered, had they prayed less, had they used less moral suasion, had they acted inconsistently at the ballot-box, the nation and sympathizing Europe might not have witnessed the revolution now in progress for the deliverance of our country from galling servitude to the slave aristocrats who have so long trampled upon their countrymen in chains, and been permitted for so many years to administer the affairs of this government.

Among the instrumentalities used to stay the progress, and put an end to the evils of slavery in this country, has been the consistent exercise of the elective franchise by the friends of human rights. They have inculcated the duty of electing good men to office, have rejected the unchristian sentiment that of two moral evils we may choose the least, have inculcated that the prayers of good men can be acceptable at the court of heaven only when they vote as they pray, that duties are ours and results are God's, that Christian electors are, morally speaking, always successful when they have truth, righteousness, and the divine approbation on their side; and that, sooner or later, it will be seen that fixedness of principle and unwavering adherence to right, result in success and triumph. The power of the ballot-box has been felt by venal politicians, and will be felt until, by the divine blessing, the friends of equal rights arise in their majesty, stop the extension of slavery, and by the exercise of moral and political power put an end to the accursed system.

In pursuance of this conviction, the representatives of the

Liberty party in the United States assembled at Buffalo, in October last, and with unusual unanimity nominated the Hon. JOHN P. HALE and the Hon. LEICESTER KING for the offices of President and Vice President—fit representatives of the great principles for which we were contending, and well qualified to administer the government constitutionally, and for the general welfare. The consistent and manly conduct of Mr. HALE in the Senate of the United States, since the nomination, has shown his constituents that their confidence was well placed; and has demonstrated that he is worthy to be the standard-bearer of the friends of liberty throughout the Union. If those who nominated him will stand by their principles and the man of their choice, preserve their unity, enlarge their operations, refuse to be diverted from the course they have themselves marked out, refrain from being submerged in other political parties, continue to use the light they have and seek for more; if they bear aloft the liberty standard; and if instead of forming alliances with the disaffected of other parties, who go no farther than to oppose the extension of slavery, they beckon their countrymen to higher and still higher principles and measures, we believe that they will not only do more good as members of the Liberty party, but exert increased influence over those who have avowed but a single anti-slavery principle. Non-extension is not abolition, though included in it; and it will be time to consider overtures of coalition from fellow-citizens who have recently awakened to see the disastrous policy of slavery extension when they shall have embraced the great anti-slavery principles we avow, viz.: the entire divorcement of the national government from slavery; the repeal of all the laws of Congress for its protection or continuance; the fulfilment of the treaty of Ghent, by which the United States agreed with Great Britain to co-operate to promote the entire abolition of the TRAFFIC IN SLAVES; the abolition

of slavery in the District of Columbia; and the overthrow of slavery in this country by peaceful and constitutional means. It will be time enough for the Liberty party of the United States, who are not only for imposing limits; but for taking measures for the destruction of slavery, to relinquish their nominees when a more numerous body of anti-slavery men shall enrol themselves to restrain and annihilate slavery, with standard-bearers of equal honesty and independence, and superior wisdom, firmness, and discretion. Till then we owe it to our able and chosen candidates, and to our party, to be united; neither to propose nor listen to terms of affiliation with any set of men, however patriotic or honest, who from policy or other cause, do not embrace the truth on the anti-slavery question, or will not fearlessly act out their convictions, or who content themselves with merely making efforts to stay the progress of an evil which we have banded together, in conjunction with the abolitionists of England and France, and the whole world, utterly to destroy.

An appeal is made to the friends of liberty to unite with those who have recently detached themselves from the two political parties with which they have hitherto acted, in elevating to the Presidency some citizen who has gone no farther in the great work of anti-slavery reform than to avow his resolution to oppose the farther extension of slavery—and this appeal, we regret to say, is endorsed by a few individuals in the Liberty party, who used strenuous efforts to bring about the nomination of Messrs. Hale and King. Permit us therefore in this exigency, to entreat you to be steadfast and unmovable, to adhere to the wise policy you have already marked out,—the maintenance of which has made you so influential. Even many of those who censured you, at the last Presidential election, for voting for a third candidate, under the pretence that the nominee of either the whig or democratic party would certainly be

elected, and therefore your votes would be thrown away, now commend your adherence to principle, by saying, "Because others do wrong, it is no reason for us to anticipate their crime."\* They also imitate your past policy, forsake their old organizations, and are forming a distinct political party. Thus they bear testimony to the wisdom of your former course; while they solicit you to unite with them that your votes may swell the number that will be cast for the Wilmot proviso candidate. But while we approve this rising spirit of independence, let us not listen to such solicitations, let them proceed from whatever quarter they may. If you relinquish the high position you have attained, by so much toil and sacrifice, you will jeopard the cause. Nay, if, to accommodate those who profess to aim only at the non-extension of slavery, you postpone the great work of emancipation, and substitute a new issue for the glorious one already made, and which has been so successfully maintained, you will injure those who now seek your alliance. You have associated, to use the sentiments of the address of the Southern and Western convention of 1845, not as partizans, but for the purpose of subserving Truth and Right; to oppose not merely the extension of slavery but to bring about, by all lawful and righteous acts, its complete overthrow. Your association is founded upon the great cardinal principle of true Democracy and of true Christianity, the brotherhood of the human family; you have resolved on waging war against slaveholding as the direst form of oppression, and then against every other species of tyranny and injustice; you are aiming to carry out the principle of liberty in all its consequences, not as a mere Abolition party, but as a party that aims at the extinction of slavery because slaveholding is inconsistent with Christian and republican principles—aiming at it not as an ultimate end, but as an illus-

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\* Hon. S. Hoar, President of the Worcester, Mass., Convention.

trious era in the advancement of society to be wrought out by its action and instrumentality.

By asserting and maintaining these high and uncompromising principles you have, with God's blessing, made a deep impression upon your countrymen, commanded the respect of mankind, and induced large numbers of the considerate and patriotic adherents to the other political parties to pause—resolve on new associations, and take the first step in withstanding the encroachments of the slave power. Be it your privilege to go forward in the great work of political regeneration, to aim at a still higher standard, and to lead forward the allies of freedom until liberty shall be proclaimed throughout the land to all the inhabitants thereof. Do not, we beseech you, retreat—under the pretence that you can thus urge on more effectually those who have just commenced the march of liberty. This is not the way to influence men nor to preserve your own integrity. Sound philosophy and political experience show that those worthy to conquer must lead, and that they who are feeling the first aspirations of freedom will follow those who bear the loftiest standard.

Is it said, this is a “crisis”—a “special case”—“unite this once,” and the Liberty party hereafter can act as efficiently as before? This is the stereotyped declaration on the eve of every Presidential election. You have, with but few exceptions, refused to listen to it heretofore. Refuse compliance with it now. At every election temptations will be presented to postpone action on the great objects of your association, to carry some collateral issue, and thus friends or foes essay to make you instrumental in achieving inferior good at the expense of fundamental principles. You ought not to enter into compromises, barter, or substitutions. Profit by experience. Never risk the success of the cause by making an issue on a minor point. Adherence to princi-

ple has been your tower of strength. Instead of lowering your standard you have elevated it. Thus you have infused courage into your ranks, and gained the respect of other parties. Is it said, by uniting with the disaffected of the other political parties, you may inspire them with your sentiments, and induce them, if successful now with your aid, to take hold of the work of emancipation? Numerically you are the smallest portion, and would be in danger of losing your identity as well as your influence. It is only in moral principle that you are now superior to others. Besides, what will be your position if the party with which you are invited to merge yourselves should be unsuccessful? Like that of Samson in the prison-house.

We cannot believe that any voter, entitled to the appellation of a friend to liberty,—we wish we could say we do not believe that any professing Christian—will, under any consideration, vote for a belligerent demagogue and aristocrat, or be carried away by popular excitement to aid in elevating to the highest office in the country a warrior destitute of civil qualifications, and whose reputation is derived from his success as a practitioner in “the science of human butchery,” in a war that his own partizans have styled “unconstitutional,” “unnecessary,” “disgraceful,” and “barbarous.” Neither is it to be imagined that a single individual who prizes liberty and abhors slavery, who loves peace and values our Christian institutions, will vote for a slaveholder or one who is the creature of slaveholders, and who for personal aggrandizement, and the power to distribute the offices and treasure of the nation on political partizans, would plunge his country into a war with any nation with which a quarrel could be provoked. Should this be the case, however, and a man answering either description be elevated to the chief magistracy, a lesson never to be forgotten will have been given to the young men of this country, teaching them



that time-serving, office-seeking, and flattering demagoguism, or successful fighting for territory and slavery are the tests of merit, and the qualifications for civil office, in the estimation of the people of the United States.

Neither can we believe that any Liberty party man will cast his vote for a politician who has, when in power, proffered his aid to the slaveocracy of the country and the world, and who has not evinced any desire that the record should be expunged. Though ready to award due praise to him who has repeatedly and ably advocated the doctrine of the non-extension of slavery, we cannot believe that while he rests there, and is "decidedly opposed" to any important principle of the Liberty party, you will be instrumental in elevating him again to the Presidential chair.

But there are apprehensions that not a few disaffected whigs and democrats; men who refuse to bow the knee to party dictation; men who have independence and conscience; men who are opposed to the extension of slavery, to the elevation of a warrior and a slaveholder, or a demagogue; men who profess to abhor slavery, nay, who avow their belief in the truth of anti-slavery doctrines, will, after all, nominate and vote for some mere Wilmot Proviso man—*this once*—rather than meet the crisis manfully, and unite with the friends of liberty in voting for one who goes not only for the non-extension but for the non-existence of slavery on the American continent. Will not such listen to the voice of expostulation and entreaty? A true-hearted friend and advocate of liberty stands before you as the nominated representative of the anti-slavery sentiment of the country. He has shown that he is honest, capable, and independent. Why not, then, unite with the friends of liberty in giving him the entire anti-slavery vote of the country? He might be elected; but, if not, the demonstration made in favor of "Liberty—Equality—Fraternity" would be an electric shock to

arouse the slumbering energies of our countrymen, and vibrate among the liberty-loving and liberty-achieving people of Europe. Is there a man in your ranks whose position at the present moment entitles him to more general favor and confidence, and who is more acceptable to the anti-slavery electors of the country, than JOHN P. HALE? We think not, and are fully persuaded that it is more reasonable that we call upon you patriotically to vote with us, than it is for you to invite our co-operation. "Principles, not men" should be the motto. It is time that the friends of liberty were united in one great confederation, not only to withstand and oppose the extension of American slavery, but to deliver the nation from its blight and curse. Any thing short of this is below the demands of the age and the hopes of the world. Republican freemen in Europe have set a noble example. Do not lag behind, and thus dishearten them in their efforts to "form a more perfect union, establish justice, ensure domestic tranquillity, provide for the common defence, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty" to themselves and their posterity.

Uniting with our friends throughout the Union, in a hearty recommendation of Mr. Hale, "we earnestly commend him to all whigs and democrats who wish to vote against slavery, as the man of the hour, possessing in an eminent degree the purity, wisdom, firmness, and ability which the country now needs at the helm; one whom they can honestly and consistently vote for, and thus secure all the advantages of unity, without a sacrifice of principle from any."\*

Friends of the slave! The eyes of Europe are upon us. They call our country the Model Republic. We are so, with one great exception. Let that stain be wiped from our national escutcheon. It was said by the departed statesman,

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\* Resolution of Liberty party in Massachusetts.

JOHN QUINCY ADAMS, "the preservation, propagation, and perpetuation of slavery has been the vital and animating spirit of the national government." It might be so still, even if the Wilmot proviso is adopted, and Oregon and the vast Mexican territories continue free from slavery. Let us aim higher, and while we oppose the spread of the leprosy, effect a cure of this most revolting and consuming disease upon the body politic. "Let us not suffer a knot of slaveholders for ever to give law and prescribe the policy of the country."\* Rather "let virtuous men unite on the ground of *universal moral principle*, and the tyranny of party will be crushed."† To this end be firm, united, progressive, unflinching, and persevere in the course marked out, "unangered and unawed." Continue to use moral suasion; cover the land, as with autumnal leaves, with anti-slavery publications, and with the speeches of the champions of freedom in Congress; "preach, print, and pray;" organize in school districts, in towns and villages; hold frequent meetings; go to other political meetings to proselyte and not to be proselyted; abandon not an inch of ground already acquired, but make aggressive movements. Invoke the aid of the pulpit, the press, the lyceum; above all, invoke the God of the oppressed—the God of our fathers—that he will indeed make this a Model Republic, where all men may rejoice in equal rights. Let your acts infuse new enthusiasm into liberty-loving men across the Atlantic, until Europe, regenerated and disenthralled, shall echo the sublime language of our revolutionary patriots: "All men are created equal, and are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights: among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

In conclusion, brethren and friends, let it be your solemn and unalterable determination that while you oppose no man who is, in any way, friendly to the anti-slavery cause, you

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\* John Quincy Adams.

† President Wayland.

will not be instrumental in his election to office, unless he adopts the distinguishing principles of the Liberty party; and, especially, that you will not go backward in the great anti-slavery reform, but, according to the ability given you, do all in your power to uphold the doctrines and measures, to the maintenance and diffusion of which you have pledged yourselves before God and man.

ARTHUR TAPPAN,  
S. S. JOCELYN,  
WILLIAM JAY,  
GEORGE WHIPPLE,  
LEWIS TAPPAN,  
S. W. BENEDICT,  
J. WARNER,  
LUTHER LEE,  
J. W. C. PENNINGTON,  
S. WILDE,  
WILLIAM JOHNSTON,  
C. B. RAY,  
THOMAS RITTER.

*New York, July 4, 1848.*

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For sale at the AMERICAN AND FOREIGN ANTI-SLAVERY OFFICE, No. 61 John street, New York, at the rate of \$5 per thousand.

WM. HARNED, Agent.

The friends of the cause are earnestly requested to take prompt measures to scatter them far and wide.